

9 July 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Items During Your Absence

1. Regarding this week's Safeguard debate, attached are copies of the following (previously passed to you by cable):

a. 2 July letter from Stennis to Laird requesting an explanation of allegations that Laird had changed his tune on the first strike problem before the Foreign Relations Committee, and that you do not support his assessment of Soviet capabilities and intentions. (Tab A)

b. 3 July letter from Stennis to Laird requesting Laird's definition and evaluation of the ICBM threat, and asking whether the Agency, and you personally, concur in Laird's definition. (Tab B)

c. 3 July letter from Stennis to you asking whether you agree with Laird's response to the above. (Tab C)

Also attached are copies of:

d. 8 July classified and unclassified letters from Laird to Stennis, which were coordinated with the Agency. (Tabs D and E)

e. 8 July letter from General Cushman to Stennis stating that you have no disagreement with Laird's 8 July letter re Soviet and ChiCom strategic capabilities. (Tab F)

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Also in preparation for the Safeguard debate and in response to Stennis' request, on 7 July we briefed the Committee staff on Soviet tactical air.

2. Re your 23 June appearance before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Bruce Clarke has gone over the transcript and made the necessary deletions of your testimony and other sensitive passages and is reasonably satisfied with the results. All references to budgets of the intelligence community about which we exchanged cables have been deleted.

Incidentally, on 1 July Laird wrote Fulbright saying the deletion of your testimony from the public version created obstacles to a balanced understanding of what had transpired, explaining Laird's own position regarding the "first strike" bit, and asking that his letter be made a part of the published record. (Tab G) Initially at least, Fulbright did not accede to this request, which I understand was received by the Committee with some irritation. (Defense does not yet know of this irritation and we are under injunctions from the Committee not to tell them.) However, Laird included a copy of this 1 July letter to Fulbright, with which our own experts found some disagreement, as an attachment to his above-mentioned 8 July response to Stennis. We do not know at this point whether Stennis will make this letter public.

3. On 1 July we received a letter from Symington (as Chairman of the Subcommittee on United States Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad of the Foreign Relations Committee) asking for details about our COMINT involvement with [ ] (Tab H) [ ] has the ball on this and sees no major problems. However, Symington is levying a similar requirement on Defense and I gather they will have some problems with it.

4. On 1 July we got a request from Representative Robert Leggett (D., Calif.), a member of House Armed Services Committee, for a briefing on the SS-9. Rivers took us off the hook by agreeing that we need not brief individual members, but says he wants us to appear at an early session of the full Armed Services Committee.

5. On 8 July Ervin's girl, Marcia MacNaughton, called to say the Senator had reluctantly agreed to hear us in executive session on 22 or 23 July. We don't know what brought this on--we have been pressing McClellan, Bayh and others on the matter and maybe they turned the trick. But even though we will now have a chance to state our case, McClellan says he thinks it is still quite important that the White House be heard from if the problem is as serious as we claim.

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6. We have been providing a lot of material to Scoop Jackson on the recent Moscow Party Conference, Politburo personalities, persecution of intellectuals, etc. I discussed with Jackson our problems in handling sticky questions on the Hill these days, and he says he is quite satisfied that we are playing it straight down the middle. He also indicated the President was satisfied. (Tab I)

7. When you have a chance I'd appreciate knowing whether my Memo for the Record of 24 June (Tab J) accurately reflects your 23 June conversation with the President. (I assume the President's instructions do not preclude our providing signed memos in response to requests by Agency Subcommittees, and blind memos in response to appropriate non-sensitive requests by other committees and members.)

8. While you were away, [redacted] father died after a long bout with cancer, and General Cushman sent a brief note of condolences on your behalf. (Tab K)

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[redacted]

John M. Maury  
Legislative Counsel

Attachments:  
Tabs A through K

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